

REMARKS

Claims 5, 8, and 13-14 are pending. Claims 5, 8, and 13-14 have been amended. Claims 10 and 12 have been canceled. No new matter has been added.

In the May 9, 2006 Office Action, the Examiner objected to the Abstract of the Disclosure. Applicants have amended the Abstract of Disclosure in view of the Examiner's comments. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the objection should be withdrawn.

The Examiner rejected claims 5 and 13 under 35 U. S. C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Applicants have amended claims 5 and 13 in view of the Examiner's comments. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection should be withdrawn.

The Examiner rejected claims 5, 8, 13, and 14 under 35 U. S. C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Thorn. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections in view of the claims as amended.

Independent Claim 5, as amended now recites:

A hollow panel comprising:
first hollow portions arranged in a substantially same plane and having a first width; and
second hollow portions arranged in the substantially same plane and having a second width different from the first width, wherein *a flat outer side portion of the hollow panel and partition walls between the first hollow portions and the second hollow portions are made of same material of wood elements.*

The Thorn reference does not disclose, teach, or suggest the hollow panel specified in independent claim 5, as amended. Unlike the hollow panel specified in claim 5, Thorn does not teach a hollow panel "wherein *a flat outer side portion of the hollow panel and partition walls between the first hollow portions and the second hollow portions are made of same material of wood elements.*"

Instead, Thorn is directed to a roofing element for the construction of roofs for factory

buildings. (*Thorn; Col. 1, lines 5-10*) Thorn discloses roofing elements including webs 4 made of a fibrous wood-based material and a flange 5 made of wood (*Thorn; Col 2, lines 26-27*) Thorn also discloses an upper skin 1 is made of plywood and a lower skin 2 made of a thin gauge steel or metal plate, which is not the same as a hollow panel wherein ***a flat outer side portion of the hollow panel and partition walls between the first hollow portions and the second hollow portions are made of same material of wood elements.***" Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 5, as amended distinguishes over Thorn.

Independent claim 8, as amended now recites:

A hollow panel comprising:
first hollow portions arranged in a substantially same plane and having a first width; and
second hollow portions arranged in the substantially same plane and having a second width different from the first width, wherein
a solid portion forming member is disposed at a part of the first and second hollow portions, the solid portion forming member having a section shape which substantially corresponds to a section shape of the part of the first and second hollow portions, and ***the hollow panel includes at least one of the first hollow portions and at least one of the second hollow portions into which the solid portion forming member is not inserted.***

The Thorn reference does not disclose, teach, or suggest the hollow panel specified in independent claim 8, as amended. Unlike the hollow panel specified in claim 5, Thorn does not teach a hollow panel which includes "***at least one of the first hollow portions and at least one of the second hollow portions into which the solid portion forming member is not inserted***"

Instead, Thorn discloses that all internal spaces defined by the webs 4 are filled with flanges 5 and insulating material.

Further, Thorn does not teach a "solid portion forming member". Rather Thorn teaches an insulating material 8 such as mineral wool or foamed urethane. (*Thorn; Col 2, lines 43-44 and 50-51*) However, this is not the same as "solid portion forming member having a section shape

which substantially corresponds to a section shape of the part of the first and second hollow portions.” Applicants note, that as such, the density of the hollow panel cannot be partially changed by inserting such materials to thereby enhance the sound insulation performance. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 8, as amended distinguishes over Thorn.

Independent claims 13 and 14, as amended, recite similar limitations to those in independent claim 8, as amended. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 13 and 14 distinguish over Thorn for reasons similar to those set forth above with respect to independent claim 8, as amended.

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In view of the foregoing amendment and remarks, Applicants believe that the claims are in condition for allowance. If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at the Los Angeles, California telephone number (213) 488-7100 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance should the Examiner believe that such a telephone conference call would advance prosecution of the application.

Respectfully submitted,

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